

# ALASKA PEOPLE

August 1993 Vol. 14, No. 8

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# Long summer days keep Glennallen BLMers hopping

by K.J. Mushovic

"Ranger, do you know how to get a duck out of a toilet?"

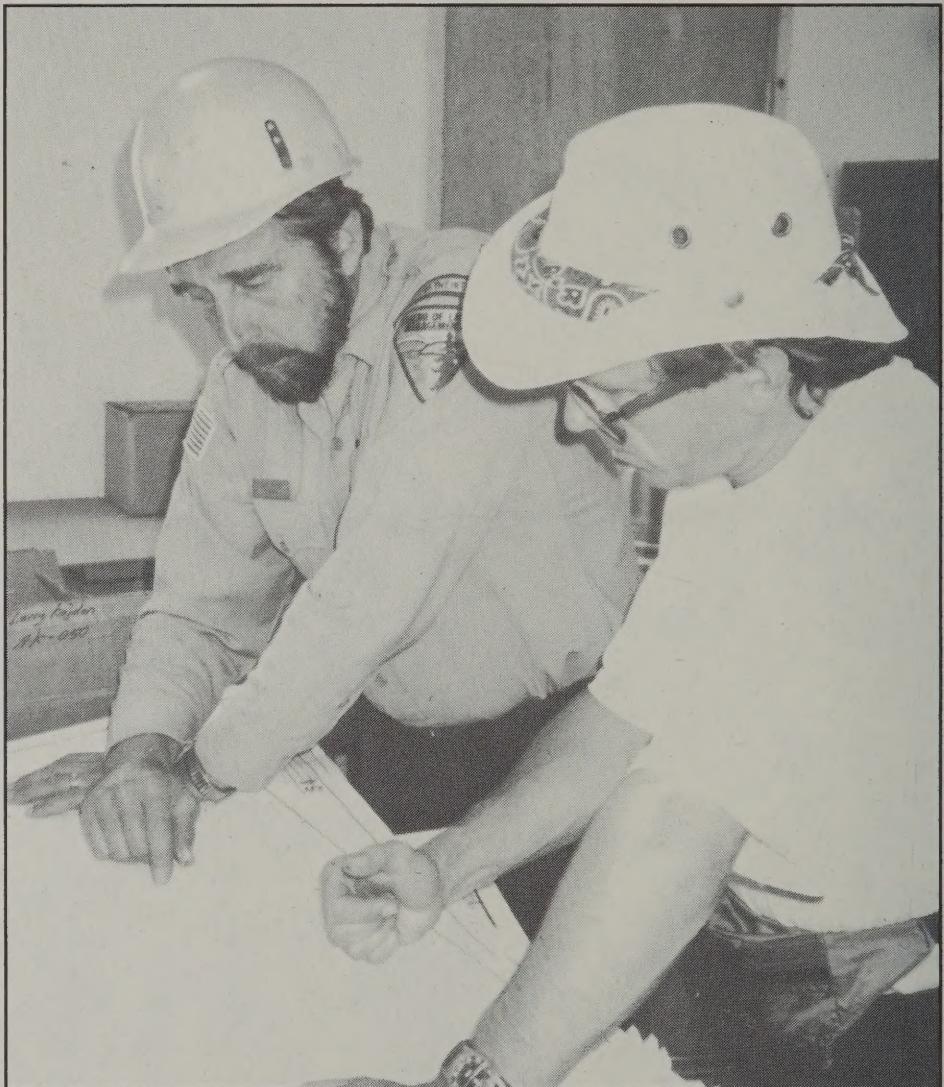
Kobuk District Ranger Mike Billbe thought the visitor to the Glennallen District's Sourdough Creek Campground was joking. But moments later he found out that an unfortunate duck had indeed found its way into a toilet pit through a large vent on one of the newly installed toilets at the campground. The district has since ordered screening to cover the vents. Fortunately for the duck (and Ranger Billbe), the campground had just opened to the public after reconstruction work, so the toilets were almost like new...

Billbe fashioned a lasso and freed the duck as bystanders applauded his efforts. He admitted that it was one of the more unusual duties he had been asked to perform as a BLM ranger. With tragedy averted, the Fourth of July holiday weekend got off to a good start in the Glennallen District.

Outdoor recreation planner Larry Kajdan reported that the district's five campgrounds have been filled to capacity during much of the summer. The busy Fourth of July weekend brought an estimated 500-600 vehicles and some 2,000+ people to the campgrounds.

The district began charging user fees at the Paxson Campground in June. The new user fees were necessary to pay for recent upgrades at the campground. "We've been getting outstanding compliance," says District Ranger Dorothy McGuinness.

Campground hosts Bill and Jeri Cron agree. Jeri says, "We try to explain that the fees will be used to keep up the campground. People from outside Alaska pretty



Rob McWhorter

BLM recreation planner Larry Kajdan (left) shows outdoor writer Michael Hodgson plans for the recent Sourdough Campground renovation. Hodgson, author of America's SECRET Recreation Areas, spent two days in late June researching recreational opportunities in the Glennallen District. Hodgson edits several outdoor magazines, including *Adventure West* and *Backpacker Magazine*.

much expect to pay fees." Use of the dump station and boat ramp are still free of charge.

In June the district conducted Swiftwater Rescue Training for 17 permanent and seasonal employees and volunteers. Four of the trained swiftwater rescue techni-

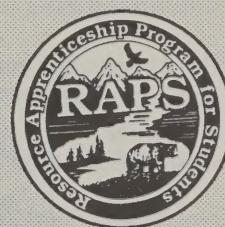
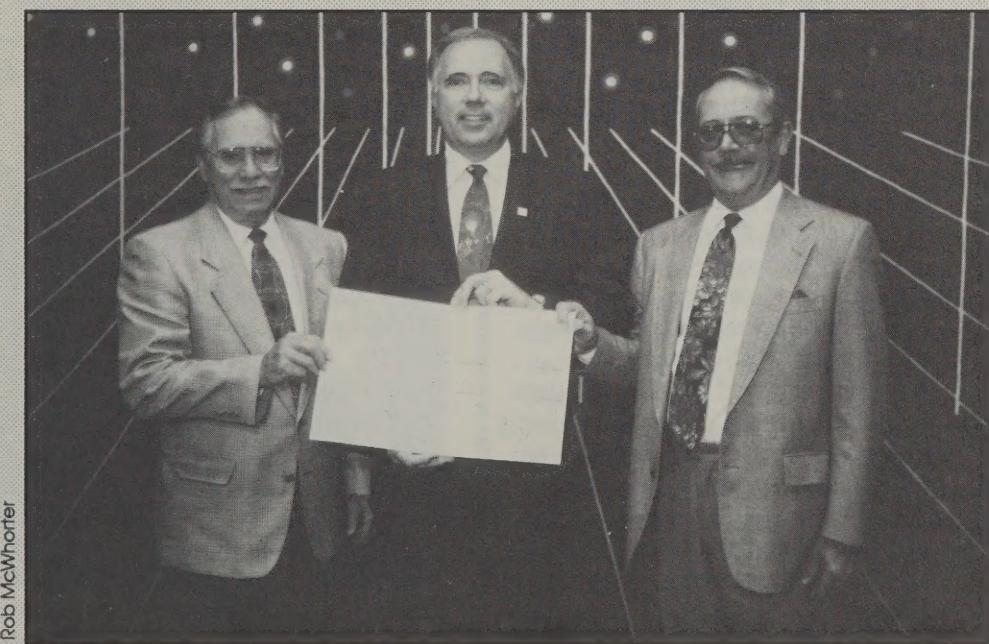
cians had a chance to put their skills to use at the Gulkana River Canyon Rapids during the July 4 weekend. The group assisted several boaters who experienced difficulty with rocks and rapids. No serious injuries occurred.



Other activities throughout the district this summer have kept Glennallen BLMers busy. Some fifty athletes entered the annual 135-mile Denali Mountain Bike Race. District Manager Gene Keith served as judge for the July 4 Gulkana River Raft Race. And for the second year in a row, the Glennallen District won a first-prize ribbon in the Glennallen Fourth of July Parade. The winning float featured a BLM "campsite" with families of BLM employees posing as campers.

**Above:** Kajdan jokingly prepares to issue a ticket to "campers" at BLM's parade float campsite. Campers are SCA Monica Haycox and Elaine, Zach, Katie, and Jacob Wieliczkiewicz, family of BLMer Ed Wieliczkiewicz. The float won first prize in its division.

**Right:** Outdoor recreation planner Janelle Eklund (left) explains how to use a paddle as a brace when crossing a stream. Eklund was an instructor at the district's recent swiftwater rescue training.



State Director Ed Spang and RAPS coordinator Bob Jones receive a \$10,000 grant from Jim Weeks of the ARCO Foundation. The generous grant will provide funding for four students participating in the Resource Apprenticeship Program for Students this summer, and assist with educational materials such as the RAPS Handbook.

# Sun and King Salmon are a great mix for SCAs

by Danielle Allen



David vanRijn, Sybille Klenzendorf, and Lee Gowey can't say enough about their work as Student Conservation Association resource assistants for the Anchorage District. The college students, relaxed and tanned courtesy of their Alaska summer, said their experience was "the best."

"I learned my share of scientific names," said Klenzendorf, while vanRijn said, "It was never boring."

The SCAs worked just outside King Salmon, where they conducted waterfowl brood surveys and analyzed the chemical composition and depths of lakes for three weeks. This meant long days canoeing lakes, dressed in shorts and enjoying one of Alaska's hottest summers. "Counting the number of duck broods was our real priority," says Gowey.

They were under the tutelage of Anchorage District wildlife



SCA resource assistant David vanRijn filters water to collect algae for chlorophyll analysis.

biologist Bruce Seppi, who had worked in the area last year with other SCAs. "I've used SCAs before to collect this information, but these guys were the most compatible team and did good work."

The only down side to their experience was the difficulties they had with their collapsible canoe. "Putting our canoe together at each lake was like putting a jigsaw puzzle together," says vanRijn.

Base camp consisted of a weatherport pitched on Alaska Department of Fish and Game property in King Salmon near the airport. King Salmon is a small town in northwest Alaska which sees an explosive influx of people in the summer due to commercial fishing. Klenzendorf said they usually didn't go to sleep until midnight after the last plane had taken off. Each day began with a quick breakfast at the Fish and Game "cook shack" before lugging their gear to an awaiting

helicopter. "We had so much gear that it was inevitable that we'd forget at least one thing each day," says Gowey. So they resorted to improvising in order to get their work done.

Klenzendorf, who was returning to Alaska for a second time, was surprised by the lack of wildlife around King Salmon. "I expected to see more wildlife, especially moose and caribou," she said.

She got her chance to see herds of moose, and bison as well, when they left King Salmon for the Farewell Burn, where they did vegetation studies for a week. Located at the base of the Alaska Range, the million-acre boreal forest suffered a devastating fire 15 years ago. BLM is studying the return of vegetation in a 30 x 50-mile study area. The SCAs helped staff record vegetation data at 23 plots. "The trees are up to your waist," says vanRijn. "Lots of plants have returned, but many areas are still charred, especially at higher elevations," said Klenzendorf.

They expressed confidence that their SCA experience will give them an edge when they apply for natural resources jobs in the future. "I think they learned that safe work habits, organization and flexibility are the keys to having a rewarding experience in the field," says Seppi.



SCA resource assistant Sybille Klenzendorf measures water color of a tundra wetland.

# Tundra Tykes Child Care Center gets new director

by Ella Wright

Yetty Michael, a Native Nigerian and former Canadian resident, is the new director for the Tundra Tykes Child Care Center. Michael reported for work at the federally-sponsored center in downtown Anchorage, June 28.

Seventy-five percent of the non-profit organization's infants to preschoolers are children of federal employees. Michael says federal employees get first priority and discounts, and children get quality care.

BLMers use the facility because it's convenient, safe and the rates are reasonable. BLM Personnel Officer Gary Reimer is vice president of the board of directors.

Priority one for the board and Michael is to meet National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) certification standards. She will continue the former director's discovery program. The program allows for each child's physical, mental, social, emotional and academic development.

Michael said, "I plan to get the kids out as much as possible. The summer is short; we might as well enjoy it."

Summer plans include trips to the Loussac Library, the Duck Pond in Eagle River, and an all-day outing at Spenard Lake for kids and parents. Michael says it's important to get to know the parents and the kids. She likes to "get down to their eye level" and communicate with the kids.

Michael, a painter and sculptor, plans to start a children's art program. "My basic interest is to continue carrying out research studies in child care centers and setting up children's art exhibitions," she said. She's eager to teach the "Tykes" to make art pieces from recycled waste materials—easy-to-shape "friendly plastics."

Michael has bachelors degrees in fine arts and education from Ahmadu Bello University, Nigeria. She has a master's in education from the University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada. She's taught kindergarten, education courses at the college level, and headed several child care facilities in Canada.

"I believe in participatory leadership—a cohesive, productive, dynamic and friendly organization," says Michael. Her objective is to provide a secure, warm and loving atmosphere for kids at Tundra Tykes.



Director Yetty Michael and her Tundra Tykes.



## Illinois teacher volunteers, takes Alaskan experiences back to her classroom

by Sharon Durgan Wilson

Fifth-grade students in Keith Country Day School in Rockford, Illinois, will know a lot more about Alaska this winter, thanks to teacher Vikki Wells. The private college-preparatory school awarded Wells a grant to broaden her knowledge of the world during her summer break. Wells used the grant to come to Alaska and give four weeks of volunteer service to BLM.

"I wanted to learn more and grow as a teacher without going back to school and paying tuition, so I volunteered my services to several agencies," Wells said. Winston Hobgood, wildlife biologist for the Steese/White Mountains District, noted her goals and her interest in wildlife, and offered Wells a volunteer position.

"It has worked out really well," Wells said. "I'm preparing a slide show to supplement my report to the school this fall."

Wells' goal was to prepare a unit on Alaska—animals, plants and people—for her students. She gathered books on Alaska, visited the University of Alaska Fairbanks Museum, and worked with BLM staff on educational materials and maps.

"I will demonstrate how Alaska Natives use an ulu to cut up food. I found a moose antler while on a field trip," Wells said. "I'll have the students reconstruct a life-size model of a moose and attach the antlers. Even picture books don't prepare people for their size."

In the office, Wells digitized Dall sheep locations for Hobgood and biologist Jim Herriges. Taking locations from coordinates on a map, Wells put the

information into a digitizer, and cross-referenced in the computer each animal's identification number and the flight number of each sighting.

Wells also accompanied the staff on a float trip down Beaver Creek to look for bear sign. "I saw lots of tracks of bears, wolves and moose," Wells said. "Several cow moose with calves were along the river, as well as lots of mosquitos. We planted grass on experimental plots at Nome Creek, 60 road miles northeast of Fairbanks."

Wells helped BLM wildlife biologist Ruth Gronquist with an early-morning breeding bird survey that was part of a nationwide survey coordinated by US Fish and Wildlife Service since 1965. "Starting at 2 a.m., we stopped on Murphy Dome road every half mile to listen for three minutes. Ruth

identified birds by sight and songs, while I recorded total numbers."

Wells fulfilled a dream by coming to Alaska. "I had my summers free, which gave me a chance to volunteer my time and skills while I learned about wildlife," Wells said.

"My first impression of Alaska was the fresh, sweet smell of clean air, with a touch of spruce. I love the daylight up here; I never get tired," Wells said. She visited Mount McKinley, and took an airplane ride towards the Alaska Range searching for moose, sheep, caribou and bison. Wells also enjoys dog sled cart racing. "And glaciers," she says. "I've seen them in films, but that's nothing like

**"I found a moose antler while on a field trip. I'll have the students reconstruct a life-size model of a moose and attach the antlers. Even picture books don't prepare people for their size."**

—Vikki Wells



**Vikki Wells**, a fifth-grade teacher from Illinois, pauses while digitizing wildlife information for the Steese/White Mountains District. Wells volunteered her services to BLM so she could learn about the animals, plants and people of the state. She is preparing a unit on Alaska to teach to her students in Rockford.

seeing them for myself. They make me feel so tiny!"

Hobgood is a strong proponent of the BLM volunteer program. "It's a good deal for both of us: BLM staff gets help during the field season at minimal cost, and the volunteer gets to experience Alaska, see what BLM does, learn new skills and acquire references, and take back their information to friends, family and co-workers."

"In Vikki's case, she not only did a lot of good work for us, but she will teach her students about Alaska, including accurate information about the role BLM plays in protecting and conserving all aspects of our environment," Hobgood said.

Hobgood would like to see the volunteer program strengthened in BLM. "Although our support of the volunteer has improved

over the years, it would be to our advantage to do more than give them just the small daily stipend and free room and board. If we had a separate, dedicated fund in the district, it would give everyone the chance to stretch those program dollars to cover assigned work.

"There are some extremely competent people out there willing to provide services to BLM," Hobgood says, "and by making their volunteer experience more pleasant, we could attract even more volunteers."



This month "PROFILES" highlights the experiences and contributions of one of our many BLM volunteers. Each year highly skilled volunteers, like Vikki Wells, provide countless hours of volunteer service to BLM while expanding their existing skills or gaining new ones.

# "Play ball!"

## School playground gets a facelift thanks to BLMer and son

by Betsy Vanek

The playground at Anchorage's Klatt Elementary School used to have severe drainage problems. That was until Campbell Tract employee Ned Darling and his 14-year-old son and Eagle Scout candidate, Steven Darling, tackled the problem. With the help of his family and community volunteers, young Steven Darling solved the school's 10-year-old drainage problem.

"The playground area and the ball field became a lake each spring because of the poor drainage," explained Ned. "The parking lot and other areas of the school drained into the playground, making it difficult for the kids to use the playground equipment or the ball field. Apparently the school district never had enough funding to permanently fix the problem. That's when we decided to evaluate the project and try to improve the drainage."

Project planning began last October. After completing a draft plan, Steven made a presentation to the Anchorage School District asking for their support and approval for the project. "We made a variety of presentations to the different groups detailing the costs and labor that would be involved," says Ned. "Finally, this spring it all came together. We received generous support from

the school district maintenance department, private construction companies, local businesses, the Klatt Elementary PTA and staff, and even State Representative Joe Green.

Ned says Steve got the Bureau of Indian Affairs to excess about \$5,000 worth of culvert pipe for the project. He also convinced the Anchorage School District maintenance department to provide staff and equipment to install 220 feet of the culvert pipe, as well as a new storm drain and a new ball diamond.

"Our volunteers were very important to the success of this project," says Ned. Volunteers included Klatt Elementary staff, kids and parents, and scouts from Steven's Boy Scout Troop 266. They built a 110-foot recycled asphalt pathway leading from the ball field to a nearby subdivision. The new pathway now forms a berm protecting the adjoining homes from the flooding they previously experienced. Volunteers also helped install culvert pipe and landscaped the area.

After 9 months of planning and about 750 volunteer hours, the project was finally completed.

"The most enjoyable part of the whole project for me was getting a chance to work closely with my son," said Ned.



Ned Darling and son Steven on the newly landscaped playground and baseball diamond at Klatt Elementary. Prior to the renovation, the playground became a pond each spring, and often drained into the adjacent subdivision.



# C Street patrol strikes again

by Teresa McPherson

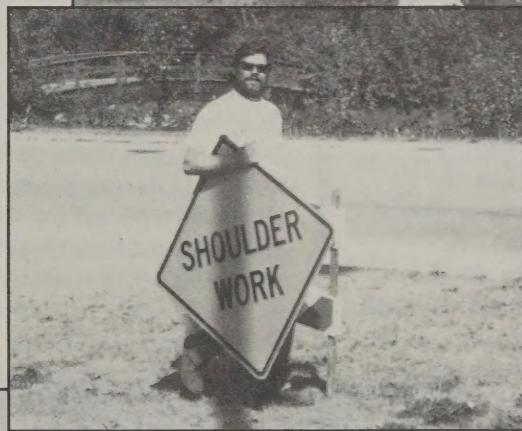
On July 16 a dozen hearty souls from the State Office once again put on their bright orange safety vests and rubber gloves. The group then headed down C Street to collect trash along the stretch of highway they officially adopted earlier this year.

It was the second of three annual cleanups State Office BLMers promised to do under the state's Adopt-a-Highway. This time, I put away my pen and pad, put on my dungarees, and helped. And I found that collecting trash along a busy city street is a lot harder than simply taking pictures of those who do!

We collected bags and bags of the usual sidewalk debris, like fast food wrappers and pop cans. Because the cleanup was only a week or so after the Fourth of July, we found a lot of fireworks debris scattered about.

We had a beautiful day for the cleanup—bright sunshine and temps in the high sixties. And it was a good feeling to get out of the office for a while and stretch our muscles doing something we felt good about. As motorists passed, we'd occasionally get a thumbs-up. And while we worked, we joked that some of the people probably thought we were doing court-ordered community service work.

The camaraderie of being with co-workers and doing something good for the community was nice. But it was definitely hard work. I now know why Kathy Flippin and her crew schedule the cleanups on Fridays—because no one can get up the next day!



**BLM "TRASH TROOPERS" IN ACTION.**  
Top: DSD Wayne Boden spruces up the area near a sign designating BLM's Adopt-a-Highway route. Center: Dave Lavimodiere places signs on C Street advising motorists to watch for workers ahead. Left: Trash Troopers deposit the fruits of their labor in a truck for hauling to the landfill. Not pictured: Troopers meet for lunch at a local pizza establishment to recoup their energy following the cleanup.

# Three reasons why quality programs fail

Though some organizations succeed at implementing total quality programs, most actually sabotage their own quality efforts. What do they do wrong? According to Robert Cenek, manager for organizational effectiveness at Intermec Corp., a manufacturer of data collection systems in Everett, WA, there are three mistakes that organizations commonly make.

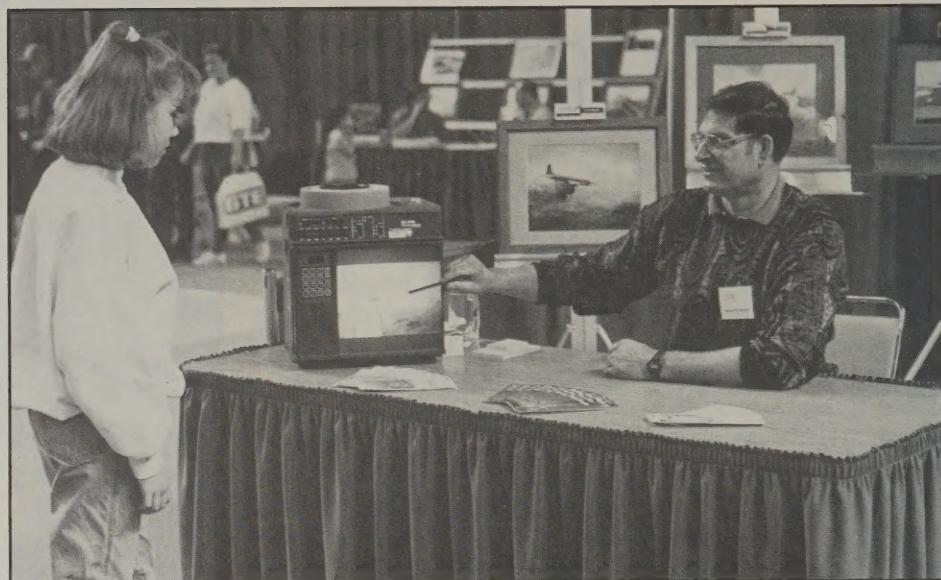
1. Short-term thinking. Total quality is doomed in an organization that stresses short-term profits, says Cenek. "Because quality improvement is a marathon and not a sprint, firms that choose to compete on a quarterly basis will correctly conclude that there are more attractive measures for quickly affecting the bottom line."

2. Insufficient training. If you really want to change your organization into a quality-conscious organization, a strong commitment to training and education is vital. A company that talks a good quality improvement game—but fails to make the investment in training—will only succeed in creating cynicism, says Cenek.

3. An emphasis on cutting costs. Managers who promote quality improvement as a way of cutting costs are missing the mark. Though reduced costs are usually a byproduct of improved quality, says Cenek, the most important goal for any quality program is to meet customer needs more effectively.

Cenek's ideas appeared in the April 1991 issue of Training. Contributed by Ron Smith, ASO employee development specialist and TQM coordinator.

# Workwise or Otherwise



Dan Gullikson

The BLM's Alaska Fire Service was part of the recent Northern Alaska Aviation Symposium's Spring Air Fair Expo held at the Carlson Center in Fairbanks. Here aviation management specialist Jim Ward explains to a young visitor how AFS uses aircraft to fight fires. Ward said the purpose of the AFS booth was to make other members of the aviation community aware of air traffic around fires. This is the second year AFS has participated in the symposium.

**OLD MEETS NEW IN REMOTE ALASKA RANGE.** While visiting the remote Mesa Site in July, State Director Ed Spang received a telephone call via satellite from Director Jim Baca in Washington, D.C. SD Spang provided the Director with an on-site briefing of the paleontological excavation in progress at the site. The Mesa Site is in a remote part of the Alaska Range inaccessible by road and far from any telecommunications facilities. Telephone communication from the site requires a generator to link up with the satellite system.

A delegation from the BLM's **Alaska Fire Service** left for Russia Aug. 1 to review the Russian wildfire management program. The group included ASD Bill Calkins, AFS associate manager Marv Robertson, David Dash of Fire Operations, and smoke-jumpers Anthony Pastro and Bruce Ford. The delegation visited Russian firefighting facilities at the invitation of the Russian National Aerial Forest Fire Protection Service. A delegation of Russian

firefighters visited AFS facilities a year ago.

In early July, a film crew from cable television's "The Learning Channel" traveled to the remote Alaska Range to observe and film paleontological excavation at the **Mesa Site**. The crew of four collected video footage of BLM employees and volunteers as they dug and sifted through Arctic soil looking for Paleoindian artifacts. The footage will be used in the channel's **ARCHAEOLOGY** television series. The air date is set for Jan. 6, 1994.

In July a group of six BLM land surveyors performed CPR on a six-year-old girl who had fallen into the Kotlik River. The girl was not breathing when she was pulled from the river. The surveyors performed CPR until a rescue plane arrived, but were unable to revive the girl. Kotlik residents expressed their appreciation for the surveyors' assistance. The land surveyors were **Mike Harmening, John Pex, Craig Dukart, Otto Thiele, Mike Keller, and Justin Rousseau**.

# Applause!

## Sustained Superior Performance Award

**Eleanor DeRoque**, Land Law Examiner, Conveyance Management  
**Michael Wilson**, Supervisory Land Surveyor, Cadastral Survey  
**Joseph Burns**, Supervisory Land Surveyor, Cadastral Survey  
**Christopher Wiita**, Land Surveyor, Cadastral Survey

## Quality Step Increase

**Teresa Pfeffer**, Budget Assistant, Kobuk District

## On-the-Spot Cash Award

**Gary Paddock**, Telecommunications Specialist, Information Resources Management

**Patricia Fatherree**, Personnel Actions Clerk, Administration

**Helen Oradei**, Personnel Actions Clerk, Administration

## Length of Service Award

### 10-Year Service Award

**Donald Durnceau**, Maintenance Mechanic, Alaska Fire Service

**Rory Spurlock**, Land Law Examiner, Conveyance Management

**Betty Adams**, Supervisory Docket Assistant, Operations

**Dennis Benson**, Realty Specialist, Anchorage District

## 20-Year Service Award

**Donald Keill**, Mining Engineer, Arctic District

**James Sisk**, Supervisory Natural Resources Specialist, Arctic District  
**Kathy Stubbs**, Land Law Examiner, Conveyance Management

## Retirements

**Perry Francis**, General Engineer, Mineral Resources

## Welcome Aboard

**Neal R. Lyons**, Materials Handler, Alaska Fire Service

**Nancy Luebbert**, Forestry Technician, Alaska Fire Service

**Karen Weerheim**, Secretary, Office of the State Director

## Moving On

**Warren DeSoto**, Secretary (OA), Administration

**Kent Fletcher**, Procurement Clerk, Administration

**Richard Fort**, Forestry Technician, Alaska Fire Service

**Walter Peterson**, Fire Support Specialist, Alaska Fire Service

**Lynn Rogers**, Cartographic Technician, Cadastral Survey

**Cheri Brewster**, Land Law Examiner, Conveyance Management

**Alicia Leone**, Land Law Examiner, Conveyance Management

## Notes from EEO...

September 15 to October 15 is Hispanic Heritage Month. The theme for 1993 is "Education is Power."

The BLM Hispanic Employment Program will be setting up information displays in the Anchorage Federal Building atrium and in the Fairbanks Office Building. Program coordinator Ramon Garcia-S says plans are also in the works for speakers and/or classroom presentations about Hispanic historical events and the contributions of Hispanic Americans to our nation's history and culture. Contact Ramon if you would like to take part in these events or contribute materials or time to this program. Ramon can be reached at 271-3248.

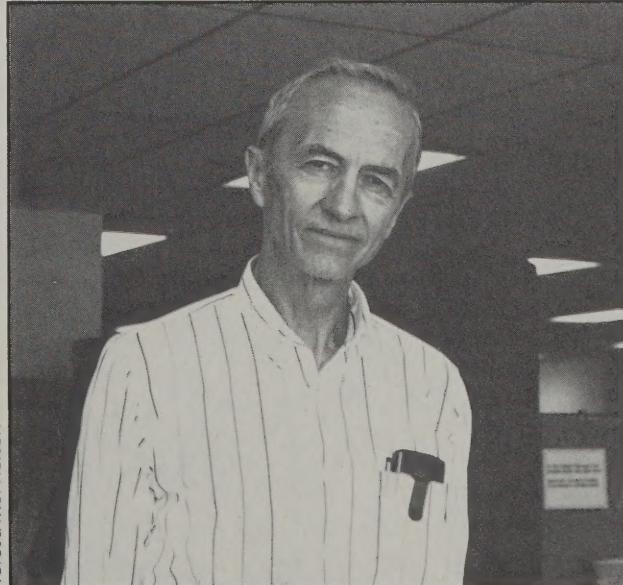
Later this fall, the EEO office and the various special emphasis programs are planning other events to observe National Disability Month, AIDS Awareness, and Native American Heritage Month. Watch for flyers announcing these events, and contact your EEO office if you would like to assist in these observances.



The Public Lands Foundation is currently accepting nominations for

its **Outstanding Public Lands Professional award**. Each year this award honors an active duty career BLM employee who has demonstrated outstanding professional performance in relation to a particular major issue or challenge having national significance. The award includes a citation describing the awardee's achievements and \$500. Nomination deadline for this year's award is November 15. To request a copy of the nomination announcement and guidelines, call 271-3322.

Teresa McPherson



Engineer Perry Francis of the Joint Pipeline Office in Anchorage retired from BLM July 30. He and his wife have since moved to Missoula, Montana, where he plans to try his hand at farming. Before leaving Alaska, Perry said: "I've been up here 12 years, and I've never driven the Alaska Highway. So we plan to throw all our worldly possessions in the back of the pickup and do just that!"

# Tideman puts together winning team

The All Federal Golf Tournament held June 28 at Moose Run Golf Course on Fort Richardson was won, to the surprise of many, by a team put together by Navigability's Dot Tideman. Tideman was on last year's winning team, which included Cadastral Survey's resident golf whiz, Steve Hamrick.

Tideman's team won the 18-hole tournament with a score of 9 under par. She says, "I credit last year and this year's wins to total teamwork." Her team consisted of retiree Bill Hanaway, David Allen of the Forest Service, Jean Mahoney of FAA, and Dick LaFever of AK Pacific Consultants.



Dot Tideman's winning team at the 2nd All Federal Golf Tournament.



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Fellow team member David Allen says their formula for success was, "Every time we absolutely needed a shot, Hanaway gave it to us. He was a good pressure A player."

The word had been, if a BLMer wanted to win, your chances were better if Hamrick was on your team, since his teams won last year and in 1989. Hamrick says, "With all I had to do as the tournament's director, I had no aspirations of winning. I just wanted to put together a team and have some fun."

The 2nd All Federal Golf Tournament got its beginning in 1989 as a BLM golf tournament. It now

includes all interested federal agencies. This year more than half of the 150 participants were BLM employees.

Golfers enjoyed a barbecue upon completing their game, and \$1,000 of prizes were awarded.

—Danielle Allen

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## On the Cover:

Anchorage District wildlife biologist Bruce Seppi collects water chemistry data from a lake in the King Salmon area. Seppi was assisted by three Student Conservation Association volunteers, who also counted duck broods in the area for three weeks. Story on pages 4-5.

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